Complaints of telephone subscribers

†469. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that defective telephones are not repaired for long in many parts of the country inspite of the complaints registered by the consumers;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take effective steps to repair the telephones well in time;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, generally, defective telephones are repaired when complaints are received. However, in some cases like theft of telecom equipments, damage of cables by other agencies and cable break down due to heavy rains, fire in exchanges and cyclones etc., fault clearance may take some time.

(b) and (c) Following steps are taken for timely repair of telephones:

(i) Provision has been made for centralised fault booking.

(ii) Computerisation of more and more Fault Repair Service (FRS).

(iii) Pagers to line staff wherever available for speedy making over of faults.

(d) Does not arise in view of (b) and (c) above.

BSNL's services to other countries

470. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is taking to look beyond the country;

(b) whether Government propose to launch its services to SAARC countries;

(c) the manner in which Government plan to spread its reach to other developing countries in Asia; and

(d) whether any strategic joint alliances are being contemplated?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) BSNL, in association with TCIL, is participating in the tenders for telecom services and installation works outside India including SAARC countries on case to case basis.

(d) No, Sir.

Uniform scam in MTNL

†471. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 2486 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th August, 2001 and state:

(a) whether C.B.I. has unearthed any Uniform scam involving crores of rupees and has also registered a case;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that arrests have been made only from amongst the Union leaders and not from the officials whereas both are equally responsible;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being contemplated by Government to punish and terminate services of all the guilty employees/officers involved in the scam and to derecognise the Union?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In a joint surprise check conducted by the CBI ACB, Delhi Branch and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-14, samples of cloth material for uniforms were seized. Subsequently, after analysing the related documents, a case *viz.* RC-70(A)/2001-DLI has been registered on 10.10.2001.

(b) RC-70(A)/2001-DLI has been registered against S/Shri Narendra Kumar, GM(MM), Shahbaz Ali, GM (Finance), Vineet Saxena, DGM(IR), MTNL and others on the allegations that the accused officials in conspiracy with others awarded a contract for supply of uniform cloth at exorbitant rates to M/s Mafatlal Industries Limited, who in turn supplied cheap quality cloth by purchasing it from the local market. In the process, the MTNL officials manipulated the tender process and fixed the rates of cloth being purchased a rate much higher than the market rate, thus causing undue loss to MTNL.

(c) In connection with the investigation of the case, Shri Sarup Singh, General Secretary of MTNL Staff Union and Shri Gautam Guha, Proprietor of M/s Sandhya Textiles were arrested.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.